

Filed for intro on 02/02/95
House Bill _____
By _____

Senate No. SB0911
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AN ACT to designate Interstate 40/Interstate 240 within Shelby County as the "Bishop J.O. Patterson, Sr. Memorial Parkway".

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

WHEREAS, from time to time, this General Assembly has seen fit to name certain highways to honor those exemplary citizens who, during their lifetimes, contributed significantly to the spiritual growth and overall prosperitiy of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, This General Assembly has previously acknowledged that the late Bishop James Oglethorpe Patterson, Sr., was an accomplished Biblical scholar, an outstanding religious leader and a reverent man of God; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Patterson's venerable life began on July 21, 1912 in Derma, Mississippi, and under the pastorate of his parents and sister, he followed the precepts of Christ; and

WHEREAS, Attending the Memphis City School system and the Howe School of Religion, presently known as LeMoyne-Owen College, James Oglethorpe Patterson committed his life to Christ and followed his call to the Gospel Ministry; and

WHEREAS, A dedicated servant of God, Bishop Patterson served the congregations at Gates, Tennessee; Brownsville, Tennessee; Homeland Church of God in Christ, Temple Church of God in Christ; the church at 1010 Woodlawn Street in Memphis, Tennessee; and Reid Temple in East Orange, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, In addition, he served the Family of Pentecostal Institutional Church of God in Christ for forty-eight years as Senior Pastor, and with an inspired program of outreach, the ministry grew from less than twenty members to over three thousand members and more than thirty satellite congregations; and

WHEREAS, James Oglethorpe Patterson was consecrated Bishop Patterson in 1955 and he served in such posts as Prelate of the Second Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of Tennessee, Secretariate of the Executive Committee of the Church, the Church's General Secretary, member of the board of Directors and Manager of the Church's Publishing House; and

WHEREAS, During the Sixty-First General Assembly of the Church in November, 1968, Bishop Patterson was elected the first Presiding Bishop of the Church of God in Christ, making him the spiritual leader of the 3.5 million followers of the church; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Patterson was God's instrument as evidenced by the membership of the church which now exceeds 4 million in the fifty states and 47 foreign countries; and

WHEREAS, His selfless service led to numerous awards and honors such as honorary degrees from Trinity Hall College of Springfield, Illinois, Saints College of Lexington, Mississippi, and Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Patterson was cited annually as one of the one-hundred most influential African Americans in America, and he received citations for his meritorious service from the Boy's Club, the Boy Scouts of America, Y.M.C.A., Memphis Landmark Commission and other civic and religious organizations; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Patterson has left behind an indelible legacy of service as he had earned the respect and admiration of all those who had the privilege to know him; he was truly committed to his family in Christ; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly wishes to grasp this opportunity to pay homage to the memory of Bishop Patterson, a gentleman who walked with the Lord on the straight and narrow path to glory; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, Interstate 40/Interstate 240 within the corporate limits of Shelby County is hereby designated as the "Bishop J.O. Patterson, Sr. Memorial Parkway" to honor the memory of this remarkable gentleman's bountiful life of purpose and commitment dedicated to serving the Lord, His Church and his fellow human beings.

SECTION 2. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect suitable markers or to affix suitable signs designating Interstate 40/Interstate 240 within Shelby County as the "Bishop J.O. Patterson, Sr. Memorial Parkway".

SECTION 3. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of Transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.

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